

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S REPORT
FOR THE YEAR 1939.



Mr. Chairman & Gentlemen,

In writing my M.O.H's report for 1939, I have kept in mind the expressed wish of the Minister of Health to make such reports as concise as possible.

In mid 1939, the estimated resident population was 5,880.

During the year the births of 54 boys and 61 girls were registered, a total of 115. 1 Still birth was registered. This gives a birth rate of 19.4 per thousand, the birth rate for England & Wales being 15.0 per thousand. The still birth rate is 1.0 per thousand and for England & Wales is 0.59 per thousand.

During the year 37 Males and 40 Females were registered as having died, a total of 77, giving a death rate of 13.0 per thousand. The corresponding figure for England & Wales is 12.1 per thousand.

In the last four months of the year a state of war existed. In the first month, in a report to the Health Committee, I pointed out the absolute necessity of the very greatest care to keep up and even to extend our Health Services. Terrifying as it must be to the unaccustomed to contemplate air raid deaths and casualties, as far as any unfortunate individuals are concerned, it is just as bad to be sent to the next world by being blasted by a bomb as fatally run over by a Rolls-Royce. It is even worse for them to die of a long lingering and painful illness.

During one period of twelve months, over a thousand were slain by enemy action and over six thousand were killed upon our roads.

Deaths are either preventable or unpreventable. Efforts, perhaps a little belated, are being made to prevent deaths, etc. from bombs: greater care by pedestrians and motorists will prevent road deaths; but without the utmost care in the treatment, etc. of illness and infection, the deaths in this County without efficient Health Services might easily be many times that of war and road deaths put together. Influenza in two years of the last war caused all over the world 50,000,000 deaths.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

8 Cases of Scarlet Fever, 5 Cases of Diphtheria, 4 Cases of Pneumonia and 6 Cases of Erysipelas were notified to me during the year. All the cases of diphtheria and Scarlet Fever were removed to Hospital. As far as I can ascertain, none of these cases of diphtheria were immunised, and I could trace no case as having been infected by another case of the same disease in this district.

In this connection, i.e., diphtheria immunisation, it would appear that the value of this has only just occurred to many important persons, from the Minister of Health, downwards. I think it is about 7 years since I introduced this to the then Urban Districts of Penistone, Thurlstone & Hoylandswaine, and every child whose parents were willing has been immunised during that period.

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) A. GORDON WILSON,

M.B., L.S.A., M.O.H.

